

**Recruitment Profile**  
**for**

**Executive Director**

**OUTFEST**  
**CREATING CHANGE. ONE STORY AT A TIME.**

***Outfest***  
***Los Angeles, CA***

**February 2019**

**LEADERSHIP TRANSITION | EXECUTIVE SEARCH | BOARD ADVISORY**

## POSITION DESCRIPTION

**Title:** Executive Director

**Organization:** Outfest ([www.outfest.org](http://www.outfest.org))

**Reports to:** Board of Directors

**Location:** Los Angeles, CA

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### **ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW:**

From the early days of the fight for full LGBTQ equality, visionary queer artists and storytellers have recorded their lives, challenges, and triumphs on film. And for nearly four decades Outfest has dedicated itself to bringing these films to audiences, to building community, and to deepening our understanding of LGBTQ lives and experiences through stories on screen.

Since its founding by students on the UCLA campus in 1982, Outfest has grown into one of the most powerful witnesses of LGBTQ lives and culture, and is among the most important LGBTQ arts organizations in the world. Outfest's mission is to 'protect our past, showcase our present, and nurture our future by fostering artistic expression of gender, sexuality and LGBTQ culture and its transformative social impact on the world.'

Through its landmark film festivals (Outfest Los Angeles & Outfest Fusion), its Outfest UCLA Legacy Project that protects and restores LGBTQ films, and its Outfest Forward educational and mentoring programs that support queer, trans, and racially diverse filmmakers, Outfest inspires story tellers, builds community, promotes equality, and changes lives.

Outfest's current programmatic initiatives include:

- ***Outfest Los Angeles LGBTQ Film Festival:*** The most respected LGBTQ film festival in the world, and the only film festival providing LGBTQ artists access to Hollywood. The festival has an attendance of almost 40,000 and features over 200 films annually. Its impact in terms of promoting and propelling filmmakers and LGBTQ stories is global.
- ***Outfest Fusion LGBTQ People of Color Film Festival:*** The only multi-cultural, multi-gender LGBTQ film festival in the country. Fusion has grown from a 3-day festival to an almost weeklong program featuring screenings, panels and workshops. It showcases and elevates the true diversity of our community, works to break down barriers to entry, and fosters equity and access for POC filmmakers through education and mentoring.
- ***Outfest Forward:*** Nurtures emerging filmmakers through mentoring programs and educational opportunities, including the long-standing Outfest Screenwriting Lab; InFusion, a POC focused professional development program; and OutSet, a project for young filmmakers.

- **Outfest UCLA Legacy Project:** The world’s only archive and restoration program solely dedicated to protecting, restoring and providing access to LGBTQ films. To date, the Legacy Project has amassed a collection of over 40,000 titles, restored 25 films, and assured that these works are seen in screenings worldwide.

Outfest is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors (currently 24 members) representing a cross section of LGBTQ community, business, and philanthropic leaders, and straight allies in the fight for LGBTQ equality. Outfest has a team of 10 fulltime and part-time staff (and as many as 40 with seasonal and contract employees during Outfest Los Angeles every summer) and hundreds of volunteers. In fiscal 2018, Outfest had revenue of roughly \$2 million, with an additional \$1.5 million in in-kind contributions. Of the \$2 million, roughly 1/3 came from corporate support, 1/3 from individual donors, and 1/3 a mix of earned income and foundation giving.

For the last 37 years, Outfest has nurtured the voices of talented artists, showcased vital stories that reflect and often transform LGBTQ lives, and protected these stories for future generations. It is now poised for a new period of growth and impact, having completed an intensive strategic planning process to frame an expanded vision of the future.

*For more information on Outfest, please visit [www.outfest.org](http://www.outfest.org)*

#### **THE POSITION:**

The Executive Director will assume day-to-day leadership and oversight responsibility for Outfest staff and programs, including fundraising, finance and administration, staff supervision, and external relations. In partnership with the Board of Directors, she/he/they will steward a strategic vision and direction for the organization, as informed by a recently completed five-year Strategic Plan. This person will bring the vision, skills, and drive to ensure that Outfest remains a visible, impactful, and sustainable leader in the ongoing fight for full inclusion of LGBTQ people and stories.

The Executive Director will be responsible for implementing policies, advising the Board on strategic direction and organizational development, and representing Outfest as a principal public face of the organization. This new leader will be tasked with expanding Outfest’s unique place in the LGBTQ equality movement, with a particular focus on the following strategic priorities:

- Operationalizing and Implementing the Strategic Plan
- Growing and Diversifying Fundraising Programs
- Broadening Membership Base and Diversifying Participants
- Expanding Programs to Reach a National Audience
- Developing Marketing & Communication Strategies to Raise Visibility & Understanding Across All Outfest Programs

**REPORTING:** This position reports to the Outfest Board of Directors, with primary accountability to the Co-Presidents and Executive Committee. She/He/They will oversee a team of 9 full and part-time staff with four direct reports: Deputy Director, Director of Programming, Director of Individual Giving, and Director of Corporate Relations.

## **PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES:**

*[NOTE: While no single candidate is likely to have equal expertise in all of the categories below, successful candidates will possess a compelling combination of strengths in many of them and the self-awareness and wisdom to hire or leverage existing resources in the area(s) where she/he/they lack personal mastery.]*

### ***Organizational Leadership***

- Develop, hold, and champion a vision of what is possible for Outfest; lead the organization and its stakeholders in advancing Outfest's mission and work;
- Drive implementation of the recently completed strategic plan, reporting progress on the plan regularly to the Board and managing staff, Board, and outside constituencies in its execution;
- Work with Program teams to ensure that Outfest's programs directly contribute to Outfest's mission and desired impact and that participants' experience is continually improved;
- Create and maintain a diverse, collaborative, respectful organizational culture for staff, Board, volunteers, and collaborators.

### ***Fundraising***

- Lead staff and Board in the development and implementation of a creative, strategic approach to all aspects of fundraising;
- Work with the Development team, the Development Committee of the Board, and other appropriate staff and Board members to set and achieve fundraising and financial goals;
- Create development initiatives designed to meet the organization's fiscal requirements and to grow fundraising capacity and results;
- Personally identify and maximize potential fundraising opportunities, including securing major individual, corporate, and foundation gifts.

### ***Financial Management***

- Provide impeccable fiscal stewardship of Outfest, ensuring integrity of all accounting, financial reporting, budgeting, cash management, and analytics activities;
- Work in close partnership with the Treasurer, Finance Committee, and Board to ensure the fiscal health of the organization;
- Have top and bottom-line accountability for a \$2M revenue budget and \$1.5 million of in-kind contributions;
- Make timely and accurate financial reporting to the Board of Directors.

### ***Staff Management***

- Supervise the hiring, training, development, and retention of staff and volunteers;
- Revise organizational structure and job descriptions as necessary (and within budget parameters) to grow capacity;
- Continue to develop and inspire a strong, performance-based culture that is collaborative and where communication is open and transparent at all levels;
- Ensure that all staff are professionally managed and supported to perform at top level.

## ***External Relations***

- Actively work to build strategic alliances with key decision-makers and influencers in the creative community;
- Deepen existing connections and relationships; work proactively and strategically to connect with new people and organizations who can advance Outfest’s work and impact;
- Act as the organization’s principal spokesperson and primary ambassador with all external partners, movement allies, audiences, and constituencies.

## ***Board Management***

- Work with Board co-Presidents to continually build and diversify the Board and leverage its members as a key component of fundraising and institutional growth;
- Facilitate and support the Board of Directors in its ability to fulfill all governance and fiduciary responsibilities;
- Serve as a non-voting member of the Board and support the work of Board committees;
- Interface between the Board and staff to maintain a communicative, supportive relationship between the two.

## **CANDIDATE PROFILE**

The new Executive Director will be an accomplished, dynamic, and growth-oriented LGBTQ leader with a passion for Outfest’s mission and an understanding of the power of storytelling in social change. She/He/They will bring a collaborative, inclusive, and transparent leadership style, combined with a commitment to support, mentor, and develop a close-knit team of dedicated professionals. To be successful, this executive leader should be a self-starter with an entrepreneurial bias and the ability to make the most of limited human and financial resources.

The ideal candidate will have deep respect for and appreciation of Outfest’s history and unique place in the LGBTQ movement and, at the same time, bring the professional skills and vision to lead the organization to new levels of growth, success, and impact. To be successful, this person should have a broad understanding of – and, ideally, connections to – the entertainment/media ecosystem in which Outfest exists; particularly at the intersection of film & television with LGBTQ history and representation. This person must also have demonstrated the ability to work effectively across diverse ages, races, socio-economic statuses, ethnicities, sexual orientations and gender identities/expressions, both inside and outside the organization.

## **Required Skills & Experience**

- Minimum of five-years of experience in a senior-level leadership role, preferably as the head of a nonprofit organization or Board.
- Proven track-record in fundraising and/or business development, including high-level donor engagement and experience with individual giving, corporate sponsorship, special events, and foundation giving.
- Strong financial acumen; able to create and actively manage an organizational budget, including planning, forecasting, and balancing the delivery of programs against the realities of a tight budget.
- Well-developed organizational leadership, creative problem-solving, and strategic planning skills; strong preference for experience developing and implementing enterprise-wide strategic plans.

- Ability to leverage current corporate, nonprofit, and educational partnerships, while strategically and simultaneously cultivating new ones.
- Marketing, communications, branding, and/or media savvy; able to develop marketing and communications strategies to raise awareness of the Outfest brand and understanding of the scope of its work and programs.
- Impeccable leadership skills, coupled with the ability to articulate strategy and goals to team members and multiple constituencies.
- Strong writing skills, especially in crafting compelling corporate sponsorship presentations and grant proposals.
- Excellent public speaker and presenter who is comfortable on camera and effective with a range of audiences/constituencies.
- Experience collaborating with community organizations and movement leaders.
- Bachelor's strongly preferred; alternatively, a history of equivalent and directly applicable professional experience will be considered.

### **Desired Personal Characteristics**

- Strongly self-motivated, entrepreneurial, self-sufficient; can lead and perform effectively with minimal support.
- Deep knowledge and understanding of the current issues facing the various constituencies within the LGBTQ+ community.
- Ability to discuss and address issues of discrimination, access, and equity facing queer women, people of color, and the trans and non-binary communities.
- Bias for action, moves things along, gets things done.
- Charismatic, dynamic, and impactful representative of Outfest and its work.
- Energetic, strong work ethic; has the stamina to manage and multi-task across multiple, concurrent priorities and multiple events and programs without a lot of down time.
- Effective communicator, internally and externally, with diplomacy and credibility.
- Self-aware, not ego-driven, gives credit to others, and knows when/where to yield the spotlight.
- An unquestioned reputation for integrity and ethics; a strong character that will quickly gain the trust of others.

### **OPPORTUNITY:**

This position provides an unparalleled platform and opportunity to make certain that LGBTQ voices are heard, that queer artists are lifted up, and that our community's stories are told *by us* and *on our terms*. In a moment when there is a renewed effort by some to silence, exclude, or marginalize LGBTQ people, Outfest is re-doubling its efforts to make certain that never happens. Indeed, Outfest is deepening its commitment to bringing the stories of those historically marginalized in our own community squarely into the spotlight.

The new Executive Director of Outfest will be able to leverage the established brand, history, and reputation of one of the premier cultural organizations in the LGBTQ community to connect and transform lives. She/He/They will work with a dedicated Board and staff to implement an expanded vision for the organization, guided by a recently completed strategic plan which envisions expanding programming and extending Outfest's reach into new communities across the country.

**TO APPLY:**

*Kevin Chase Executive Search works only with Equal Opportunity Employers. Outfest strongly believes in the strength of diversity and actively encourages applications from women, people of color, transgender/nonbinary people and any qualified person who supports Outfest's mission.*

Kevin Chase Executive Search Group has been retained to lead this recruitment effort on behalf of Outfest. We are pleased to answer any questions or supply further information. Inquiries, nominations, or applications (including a cover letter and resume/curriculum vitae) should be directed electronically and in confidence, to:

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All inquiries or referrals will be held in strict confidence.

*Please note that all education, dates of employment, compensation and other information provided will be verified prior to an offer of employment.*